

The Keweenaw Cup: Cyclocross Racing Comes to the Keweenaw

Fast-paced cyclocross action comes to the Keweenaw this weekend. The first annual Keweenaw Cup, organized by Houghton's Red Jacket - BlueSky Health Cycling Team together with Marquette's KMK Cycling Club, will see upwards of 70 racers lining up for two days of racing: Saturday, Oct. 11, in the Top of the World Smackdown at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge in Copper Harbor and Sunday, Oct. 12, in the MTU Dirt Derby on the Michigan Tech Trails in Houghton. Weekend champions in each of 3 classes will be awarded the illustrious Keweenaw Cup.

The races are open to everyone of all ages and all abilities on any kind of bike. No experience required! Typically 30 minutes to one hour in duration, cyclocross events are timed races held on short courses (1 – 1.5 miles) and include surfaces ranging from pavement and dirt roads to singletrack and grass. Obstacles such as wooden barriers, logs, sand pits, unrideable hills and fire-spitting dragons add to the challenge – and make mounting and dismounting an integral part of the race. Though it may sound intimidating to the uninitiated, the festival-like atmosphere that surrounds every cyclocross race – with clamoring cowbells and cheering spectators – make it a unique sporting event. The short courses ensure that there are nearly always racers in sight, and that racers are never out of earshot of an encouraging word.

The \$20 entry fee for Saturday's afternoon race includes dinner at the Pines Restaurant in Copper Harbor as well as music by Marquette's Andy Langlois and Houghton's Mike Labeau. Dinner tickets will be available at the Pines on Saturday for non-racers. All proceeds from Saturday's events will go to the Copper Harbor Trails Club. Proceeds from Sunday's late morning/early afternoon race (\$10 entry fee) will benefit the Michigan Tech Trails.

The Keweenaw Cup marks the fourth weekend of racing in this year's UPCROSS Points Series, a 7-race series of cyclocross events organized by Marquette's KMK Cycling Club. This series attracts racers each week from across the U.P. from late September through early November. With double points on the line for each of the Keweenaw Cup races, a large turnout is expected from across the Western U.P. and Northern Wisconsin in the only weekend of the series featuring two days of racing.

Anyone interested in giving cyclocross a try before this weekend's races is welcome to join the Red Jacket Cyclocross Team this (and every) Thursday on the Michigan Tech trails at 6:30pm. This week, we'll be previewing and fine-tuning Sunday's race course. Everyone is welcome and there is no charge.

Further details on the Keweenaw Cup at www.redjacketcycling.com/keweenawcup.

Questions: Call Chris Schmidt @ 370-1997.